Name of the Company	No. of VPTs to be installed during the extended period
M/s Bharti Telenet Ltd., Madhya Pradesh	Nil
M/s Tata Teleservices Ltd., Andhra Pradesh	1314
M/s Hughes Telecom now Tata Teleservices (Maharashtra) Ltd., Maharashtra	2019
M/s Reliance Telecom Ltd., Gujarat	3939
M/s Shyam Telelink Ltd., Rajasthan	847
M/s HFCL Infotel Ltd., Punjab	831*

* All the villages have been covered by BSNL in Punjab, the faulty MARRs are to be replaced by the Licensee.

*.Figures as reported by the licensees.

Village Public Telephones

3577. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) the number of villages in the country which are presently without telephone facility, district-wise; and

(b) the details of the steps, if any, taken by Government to provide telephone facility in these villages alongwith the time frame?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN) : (a) About 93200 villages in the country are presently without telephone facility. The District-wise details are being collected.

(b) Government has a policy to cover all the villages of the country with a village public telephone by the end of December, 2003 except those villages which are to be provided via satellite. The villages in the far flung and remote areas to be covered via satellite will be provided within one year from the date of availability of funds.